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ABSTRACT

Agenda setting provides an analysis strategy for linking press coverage and voter perceptions of front runners, and underscores the importance of studying the primaries early in an election year. Two studies were undertaken in 1976. The first study, in Onandaga County (New York), involved telephone interviews of 335 registered Democrats in late February, concerning information they had about issues and candidates. Second interviews were held with 177 of the same Democrats in late March. The second study involved interviews of 143 registered voters in February, March, and May--in Evanston (Illinois), Indianapolis (Indiana), and Lebanon (New Hampshire)--concerning voter reactions to primary elections, especially to those in these three states. Data from these studies and from national polls taken during the same period show that the primary season is more important in determining who is leading the field and in providing candidate information than it is in setting forth issues or in fixing candidate preferences. Indirect evidence shows that the media are at least partially responsible for shifts of opinion about front-runner status and for increased knowledge of candidates. (JM)

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U.S. Primary Politics and Public Opinion:

The Role of the Press in Determining Voter Reactions

By

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ABSTRACT: The agenda-setting framework for studying media effects is extended to examine the role of the press in determining frontrunner candidates and salient attributes of candidates. Drawing on data from national polls and two panel studies, the authors present evidence in support of this extension.

CS 501 741

U.S. Primary Politics and Public Opinion:

The Role of the Press in Determining Voter Reactions

Political observers generally have viewed U.S. presidential elections on a grand scale, examining them primarily in terms of the final outcome--election of a leader. The result has been that Spring primaries have been studied far less than Fall general elections, and what the voters know about the candidates examined far less than how the voters feel about them.

As a strategy for research, focus on the general elections is easily defensible. Much is to be gained by generation of large, national data sets providing extensive information on national sentiments and voters' concerns. Such data, which allow for a multitude of trend comparisons, can be most valuable when temporal and regional variations are as minimal as they are in the general elections. In the primaries, differences in state election laws, candidates' strategies, and even the historical moment, make comparisons from state to state as well as election year to election year most difficult.

In the general elections, the number of candidates vying for voter support is small--usually no more than two real contestants. In contrast, the primaries typically involve large numbers of candidates, confounding problems of question wording, response categories, and analysis strategy. Since the situation can change from day to day, questionnaire items and analysis plans easily can become irrelevant by the time any project is in the field.

Primaries also present two kinds of sampling problems not present in the Fall general elections. The first stems from the relatively low turnout in the

primary contests (around 40% of those registered in recent years). This makes determination of who is going to vote at least as important as actual vote. Over half of the respondents must be discarded for analyses which focus on vote decision; far fewer must be eliminated for comparable analyses in the Fall campaigns, where closer to 85% of the registered voters actually go to the polls. The second sampling problem stems from the intra-party nature of the primary contests. Since different ballots are used by the two parties, respondents must be reliably identified by official party registration. Independents, who account for roughly 35% of the voters nationally, have no role in the primary election process and must be eliminated from the sample and subsequent analyses dealing with primary vote choice.

Despite all the problems, by ignoring the primaries researchers may be missing one of the key opportunities to study the interplay of forces which lead to voter decisions. Many of the forces which produce political stability across general elections, such as party affiliation and social background (Lazarsfeld, Berelson & Gaudet, 1948; Berelson, Lazarsfeld & McPhee, 1954), are less likely to enter the picture in intra-party, primary contests.

The primary season is a formative period for many voters--a time when they mold their attitudes and build their knowledge about many of the candidates. Beniger (1976), for example, has presented evidence the primaries affect candidates' standings in the public opinion polls. Success in the polls, in turn, has been shown to have a striking relationship to success before the nominating conventions.

The focus in electoral research historically has been on how the voters feel about the candidates rather than what they know about them. The voting

decision--the final evaluation of the candidates--generally has been viewed as the affective judgment capping a large set of political attitudes. Viewed as much farther back in the behavioral process culminating in a ballot decision are the perceived qualities and issue stands of the candidates and the information the electorate has on the candidates and issues.

This heavy attitudinal orientation, particularly on the part of U.S. researchers interested in the role of communications in the electoral process, is easily understood. Sears and Whitney (1973) have noted, for example, the influence of propaganda research during the 1930s and 1940s on early efforts in the field of political communications. Early scholars were interested in--and concerned about--attitudinal consequences of propaganda. The broad and lasting implications of this early attitudinal orientation on the study of communications have been detailed elsewhere (Blumler & McLeod, 1974; Becker, McCombs & McLeod, 1975). One consequence in the field of political communications is that relatively little research has been done examining what the voters have learned about the issues and the candidates through the mass media. This is particularly true where the primary is concerned.

AN AGENDA-SETTING FRAMEWORK

The general evidence is that voters do learn from the mass media. Not only do they learn factual information about the issues and candidates, they also acquire their perspectives about the relative importance and prominence of issues from the media. Through their day-by-day selection and display of the news, editors and broadcasters influence what the voters regard as the key elements of the campaign (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Becker, et al., 1975; Shaw & McCombs,

in press). In other words, the press plays a role in setting the agenda for the campaign.

It is this ability of the press to effect significant cognitive change among its audience members which has come to be labeled the agenda-setting influence of the mass media. Here may lie one of the most powerful effects of the media--their ability to structure voters' perceptions of key aspects of the political arena.

Agenda-setting provides an alternative perspective for the study of political communication and the analysis of mass communication in a political campaign. The agenda-setting framework is concerned with cognitions, not attitudes. The difference between attitudes and cognitions and between the attitudinal and the agenda-setting effects of the mass media has been put succinctly by Cohen (1963) who remarked: While the press may not tell us what to think, it definitely tells us what to think about.

Most of the research to date on the agenda-setting influence of the press, summarized elsewhere (Becker, et al., 1975; McCombs, 1976), has focused on the issues in political campaigns. But agenda-setting is a helpful framework for examination of other cognitive effects of the media where the press may play a role in determining what is and what is not prominent. Under such a framework, agenda-setting can include two important aspects of candidate imagery in an election year.

First, just as it is possible to conceive of an agenda of issues--an array of topics ordered from most to least salient--it also is possible to conceive of an agenda of candidates--an array of politicians ordered from most to least

prominent. To speak of an agenda of candidates is both an easy and useful translation of the agenda-setting framework. It may be especially useful for organizing research on voters' reactions to a crowded primary field, such as existed for the Democrats in early 1976. In those early weeks, the number of candidates approached a dozen. Yet one candidate, Jimmy Carter, seemed to emerge as the most prominent before the primary season ended, and he was nominated as the Democratic candidate at the July convention. Press coverage of the Spring primaries would be expected to influence the agenda of candidates in voter's minds.

Just as there can be an agenda of issues and an agenda of candidates, there also can be an agenda of attributes or characteristics for an issue or candidate. The press not only presents an array of issues and candidates; for each it also presents an array of attributes. Two recent studies (Cohen, 1975; Benton and Frazier, 1976) have documented the agenda-setting influence of the press on the attributes of an issue perceived as salient by the public. The second translation of the agenda-setting influence made here to study candidate imagery extends this idea to the perceived attributes of a political candidate. As such it examines what attributes of the candidates are salient among the voters and how the press coverage of the primaries may have influenced these perceptions.

In short, the study of candidate imagery during the primaries extends agenda-setting from issues and their attributes to a key new political and public opinion domain--candidates and their perceived attributes. In turn, agenda-setting provides useful conceptual guidelines for the study of candidate imagery during the primaries.

Agenda-setting not only provides an explicit analysis strategy for linking press coverage and voter perceptions of frontrunners and their salient attributes.

As a cognitive process, agenda-setting emphasizes the distinction between the cognitive aspects of candidate imagery and the affective, attitudinal components of candidates' images. While Nimmo and Savage (1976) and others dealing with images of candidates have recognized the cognitive component, the general approach, illustrated by Sears (1969), has been to treat image as a largely affective response.

The agenda-setting framework also underscores the importance of studying the primaries early in an election year. Agenda-setting, the transfer of concerns from the media to the public, directs attention to the early, formative stages of public opinion when the actors and issues around whom public opinion will form establish their places in the political arena.

This look at the genesis of voter opinion is especially critical for understanding U.S. presidential politics in 1976, when an initially obscure peanut farmer, elected only to one term as a state senator and one term as governor of Georgia, stood in the national polls at mid-summer of 1976 ahead of the incumbent president of the United States, a man who had served over 20 years in national political office. The obscure peanut farmer, of course, went on to win the Fall general election.

METHOD

Data which address issues raised here are available from two related 1976 studies which began early in the primary season.

The first study was conducted in Onondaga County, an upstate New York metropolitan area with a diversified industrial and commercial base and half a million residents. Syracuse is the largest community in the county. In late

February of 1976, after the Iowa and Mississippi state Democratic caucuses, but before the beginning of the primaries, interviews were conducted with a probability sample of registered Democrats in that part of the county which falls into the 32nd Congressional District. (Presidential primary voting in New York is by Congressional District.) Roughly half of Onondaga County and the city of Syracuse is in the 32nd.

Interviews were conducted via telephone by trained personnel. Complete interviews were obtained with 335 registered Democrats, or 73% of those sampled having telephones. Comparisons with known population characteristics indicated no bias because of return rate or dependence on telephone listings. Median age for the sample was 42. Only 13% of the sample members were college graduates. Fifty-three percent were female.

The February questionnaire included various items designed to measure the information Democratic voters had about the issues and candidates in the crowded primary field (which included 11 declared and undeclared candidates). The Democratic race was chosen over the Republican because the former was more complex at the time.

The February data serve as a baseline for data from a second wave of interviews with 277 of the 335 Democrats originally interviewed. (The 277 interviews represented 82% of those interviewed in February and 60% of the original sample members. Comparisons showed no bias due to attrition in the panel.) The second survey was in the field immediately after the North Carolina primary in late March and before the New York primary in early April. The March questionnaire repeated many questions from the February wave and focused on the upcoming New York contest.

Between the two interview periods, six primaries had been conducted. Jimmy Carter received a plurality of the votes cast in New Hampshire (30%), Vermont (46%), Florida (34%) and Illinois (48%) and a majority in North Carolina (54%). Henry Jackson received the plurality in Massachusetts with 22% of the vote. (Carter ran fourth with 14%.) These primary victories, coupled with his caucus victory in Iowa in January, helped catapult Carter into national prominence and, via the delegates earned, eventual victory at the July Democratic convention in New York.

The second study, which involved a panel of 143 registered voters, was initiated in February. Approximately equal numbers of voters were selected in three locations: Evanston, Ill., Indianapolis, Ind., and Lebanon, N.H. As in the Onondaga County study, interviews were conducted in February and March, plus an additional wave in May. These interviews provide extensive data on voter reactions to the primary elections, particularly those held in each of the three states during the period. Carter won in all three states. Though he did not win the New York contest, he won narrowly in Wisconsin on the same day (37%) and went on to a victory in Pennsylvania (37%) a week before the Indiana primary on May 4, where he received 68% of the votes.

Though the three sites were chosen to provide some diversity of living experiences among the panel members, no attempt was made to draw a proportionate sample from the three communities. Rather the probability samples were designed to over-represent those in the communities who followed the campaigns either in their newspapers or on television. Those not using the media and those indicating no interest in politics were systematically eliminated. The intent was

to focus on individuals in three diverse settings (suburban Illinois, urban and suburban Indiana and small town New Hampshire) and how they used and were affected by the mass media.

Examination of the demographic makeup of the panel shows the median age was in the 30s, about 40% of the members were college graduates, and approximately half of those working outside the home had jobs traditionally classified as white collar. Forty-seven percent of the panel were female.*

RESULTS

National poll data coupled with responses from the Onondaga County study support the general expectation that Democratic voters changed their support of the various candidates as the primaries unfolded. Jimmy Carter began the election year with the support of only 4% of the Democrats surveyed by Gallup, Table 1 indicates, but increased that figure to 12% just after his victory in the New Hampshire primary in late February. While a change in the Gallup question wording makes direct comparison of the February findings with those in March and early April impossible (see notes to Table 1), it is clear that Carter's support was relatively stable after the New Hampshire victory. (Shifts of 5% or greater are significant at the .05 level.) Additional increased support did not come to the Georgian until after the Pennsylvania primary victory, when Jackson dropped from the race, Humphrey decided not to enter, and the hopes of the other contenders were dimmed. These real changes in the field, of course, caused Gallup to discontinue use of the question at that time.

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* This study was undertaken jointly by the authors and Professors Doris Graber, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, and David Weaver and John Schweitzer, Indiana University.

The Onondaga County findings are supportive of this same pattern. Carter shows a significant increase in vote intentions during the five-week lapse between the New Hampshire and New York primaries. As the media narrowed and intensified their focus on a smaller field of Democratic candidates, greater numbers of voters committed themselves to Carter. The difference in March figures for the two data sets probably reflect differences in question wording as well as real differences in the situations nationally and in New York. Actual voting results in Onondaga County suggest most of the undecided voters in March never went to the polls.

There also is evidence, shown in Table 2, that the salience of some issues changed during the primary season. For the national Gallup data, which includes responses of Independents and Repulicans as well as Democrats, this shift is rather marked, with 47% of those interviewed saying the cost of living was the most important problem in January and only 38% giving that response in late April. (Shifts of 4% are significant at the .05 level.) Dissatisfaction with government also shows a marked increase in prominence during the period.

While the other two studies do not show identical shifts (different questions and coding schemes were used for each study), there is evidence of change here as well. The increased salience of foreign affairs in both the Onondaga County and Three Site studies is particularly interesting given the attempts of Democratic contender Henry Jackson and Republican challenger Ronald Reagan to push this issue. (Shifts of 8 and 12% are significant for the two studies, respectively.) The Onondaga County data include responses of only Democrats, of course, while the Three Site data include responses of members of both parties and Independents.

The Gallup data were shown in Tables 1 and 2 to provide a national perspective for the two studies reported here. In general, these comparisons show considerable similarity among the studies. Economic issues, for instance, are dominant in Table 2 regardless of the study examined. The percentage of respondents rating Foreign Affairs as salient is almost identical in the three studies when the January and February results are compared.

While the shifts in survey responses to the questions on candidate preference and issue salience might be considered moderate, such an adjective is totally inappropriate for the changes evidenced in Table 3.

Voters in both the Onondaga County and Three Site surveys were very unsure in February who was leading the crowded Democratic field. Not so in late March. By that time, Jimmy Carter had risen to the top of the list--or agenda--of candidates. In the voters' view, the field had been considerably changed by the events of the early primary season. A massive agenda shift placing Carter number one on the Democratic candidate list had occurred well before the actual votes crystallized.

Similar, if slightly less dramatic, changes are shown in Table 4, which reports the recognition scores of the 11 candidates from the Onondaga County study. (Senator Frank Church had not yet entered the race at the time of the March wave; Hubert Humphrey never officially did.) The over-all pattern is a significant increase in voter ability to provide some minimal amount of information about the candidates in the crowded field. Only one candidate, Texas Senator Lloyd Bentsen, who dropped from the race in late February, failed to show an increase greater than the 8% needed for statistical significance (at the .05 level). Carter, with his string of primary victories, increased the

most in recognition between the survey field dates. Congressman Morris Udall, who came in second in two of those primaries, and Senator Henry Jackson, who won one, showed the next largest increases.

Tables 1 through 4 present an interesting picture of voter reactiors during the primary developments. Using the Onondaga County study as the base, since its data are available for all four tables, we see an 8% increase in Carter's support during the study period, compared with a 60% increase in leadership status and a 38% increase in recognition. During the same time, economic issues (for Onondaga County Democrats, at least) remained about equally salient and topped the agenda.

The general impression is that primaries are more important, from the voters' point of view, in determining who is leading the field--and worth following--and for providing information about the candidates than setting forth issues or fixing candidate preferences. In fact, the voters in the Three Site study said as much. When asked, 65% of these respondents said the primaries helped them learn about the candidates. In contrast, 46% of those same respondents said the primaries helped them learn about the issues. That does not argue that issues are unimportant, of course, but it does suggest the value of examining some of the causes of the rather dramatic shifts in status and knowledge of the candidates. In other words, during the primaries the agenda of candidates and candidate attributes shifts more than the agenda of campaign issues. To what extent do these shifts reflect mass media influence?

It is possible, of course, the media had relatively little to do with these changes. The shifts in opinion could be counter to those suggested by the press. The changes, as well, could be the result of other information channels, particularly those associated with the social network in which the individual voters live.

There is little to support the first alternative explanation, however. The national press labeled Jimmy Carter the frontrunner--the candidate to beat--after his victory in New Hampshire. After the early string of primaries, data in Table 3 indicate, voters came to accept a similar point of view.

Examination of one representative of the national press, Newsweek, indicates as well that the press was describing the Democratic candidates in much the same way as the Democratic voters in Onondaga County. In its pre-campaign, thumbnail sketches of the candidates, Table 5 indicates, Newsweek presented an agenda of attributes for the candidates very much like the agenda later presented by the voters. In fact, the Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient increases from .64 (media compared to the pre-campaign wave of the survey) to .83 for the media by late March results.

Other data for the candidates not shown here in detail is also quite compelling. For example, the age of Senator Hubert Humphrey alone among the candidates is reported in the Newsweek sketches. Ten of the 24 mentions of age by the voters was for the former vice president, and only two other candidates were described by age more than once. The Kennedy connection for in-law Sargent Shriver is prominent both with the media and the voters. In fact, it is Shriver's most mentioned attribute, ranking higher than his ill-fated experience as the Democratic vice presidential candidate in 1972. What is newsworthy to the media seems to become salient to the voters.

Additional evidence that the media had influence on voters' cognitions of the primaries is presented in Tables 6 and 7. In the former, controls were introduced to examine the possibility that relationships between the media content and individual voter reactions were spurious.

Exposure to the media should lead voters to think of certain candidates as more prominent than others in part by directing attention to the primary outcomes. These primary results are the evidence used to support reporters' and writers' contentions that certain candidates are in fact leading the pack. An important first step, then, is to examine the relationship between exposure to media coverage of the campaign and knowledge of the outcomes. The top half of Table 6 presents six zero-order correlation coefficients which allow for a relatively simple, but powerful test of this expectation. Campaign media use was measured by self-report of amount of newspaper and television exposure. In February, the Democratic voters were asked who had won the Iowa and Mississippi caucuses. (Carter and Wallace, respectively, had.) In March, voters were asked about the New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Florida and Illinois primaries. (Carter won in the first and last two; Jackson won in Massachusetts.) Using the logic of the cross-lagged correlation technique (Rozelle & Campbell, 1969), we see that there is stronger evidence that media use leads to an understanding of the election results (reflected in the .33 correlation between February media use and March knowledge of the results) than that early knowledge leads to media exposure (reflected in the .18 correlation). In other words, the media seem to be having some effect.

The cross-lagged technique, however, also allows for control of unmeasured variables, such as social relationships of the voters, and here the results are slightly ambiguous. Rozelle and Campbell suggest computation of a baseline statistic, against which the cross-lags (underlined in Table 6) can be compared. The baseline for the top part of the table is .15, meaning both correlations

qualify as of some consequence. The more traditional partials for educational level of the voters (shown in parentheses in Table 6) lead to the same conclusion. Indeed the media seem to have a major effect on knowledge of the outcomes; but knowledge of the outcomes also has some influence on exposure.

The interpretation for the lower half of Table 6 is similar, only here the difference in the cross-lags is even more trivial. (The baseline statistic is .25.) The evidence is that media use leads to knowledge about the characteristics of the candidates, and knowledge of the candidates also leads to media use. The former relationship is the one of interest to us here. In both cases, Table 6 suggests the media are important determinants of voter responses to primary politics.

Table 7 tests the linkage we posited between thinking given candidates had won the primaries and thinking the same candidates were in the lead overall. While the evidence is rather striking in its support of our position, it is interesting to note that the relationship does not seem to be monotonic across time. Rather the voters seem to recognize the cumulative nature of primary victories.

The jump in the magnitude of the relationships between these two variables from the February to the March waves also is quite marked. While only 17% of those who thought Carter won the Iowa caucus also thought he was the frontrunner in February, for example, almost 74% of those thinking Carter won in New Hampshire considered him the frontrunner. In the minds of the voters, the primary season seemed to build to a climax in much the way the media reports of the campaign did.

CONCLUSIONS

Data from two separate studies conducted during the presidential primary season of 1976 have been coupled with national polling data to provide a picture of the public opinion environment during that period. In general, the data argue, the primary season is more important in determining who is leading the field and providing information about the candidates than in setting forth issues or fixing candidate preferences. Neither the issue saliences nor the allegiances of the voters to the candidates change much during the period.

There is indirect evidence as well that the media are at least partially responsible for the demonstrated shifts in opinion regarding the frontrunner status and the increased knowledge of the candidates. The attributes of the candidates discussed in one selected representative of the media, for example, are fairly similar to those discussed by survey respondents. And the level of knowledge (or recognition) of the candidates is correlated with media use during the campaign period. Media use also is correlated with knowledge of the results of the primary and caucus outcomes. The link also has been made between perceptions of who won the caucuses and primaries and who was considered to be the frontrunner in the overall contest.

If the media do in fact determine the field of relevant candidates for the primary season and designate crucial characteristics of those candidates, they most likely would do so in fairly subtle ways. In other words, the process of media influence would be through such factors as those identified here. By making voters aware of the candidates in general and the victors in specified primary and caucus contests, the media may well be laying the groundwork for this type of agenda-setting influence.

The test of media influence on these agendas of candidates and agendas of attributes is, then, rather indirect. By tracing the path of influence, however, researchers may be better able to understand how the media affect primary politics. The preliminary evidence reported here is that they do indeed have influence during that relatively unexplored period of campaign behavior.

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Table 1

Preferred Candidates of Democrats

Gallup Poll*	Jan. 2-5	Jan. 23-26	Feb. 27-March 1	March 10-13	March 19-22	March 26-29	April 9-12
Jimmy Carter	4%	4%	12%	26%	29%	29%	28%
Hubert Humphrey	19	17	18	27	30	30	31
Henry Jackson	7	5	5	15	10	7	8
Morris Udall	2	2	3	5	4	4	5
George Wallace	11	18	14	15	17	13	13
Others/Undecided	57	54	48	12	10	17	15

Onondaga Co.**	Feb. 10-19	March 24-30
Jimmy Carter	3%	11%
Hubert Humphrey	11	9
Henry Jackson	5	9
Morris Udall	2	5
George Wallace	2	-
Others/Undecided	77	66

* The Gallup question asked Democratic respondents which of the candidates on a list "would you like to see nominated as the Democratic candidate for president in 1976?" The list was altered after the Feb. 27-March 1 survey, when Edward Kennedy's name was removed. Results for the first three surveys are not comparable to those following. (Source: The Gallup Opinion Index, No. 129, April 1976. N = approximately 670 Democrats for each survey.)

** The question asked "for whom do you plan to vote in the New York presidential primary?" No list was used to indicate candidates on the ballot. (N = 335 Democrats in February and 277 in March.)

Table 2

Saliences of Issues

Gallup Poll*	Jan. 2-5	Apr. 23-26
High Cost of Living	47%	38%
Unemployment	23	24
Crime	8	8
Dissatisfaction with Govt.	4	13
Corruption in Govt.	-	4
Foreign Affairs	5	5

Onondaga Co.**	Feb. 10-19	Mar. 24-30
State of Economy	25%	31%
Unemployment	23	25
Inflation	12	9
Quality of Leadership	7	5
Corruption in Govt.	4	-
Foreign Policy	3	6

Three Sites***	Feb. 4-24	Mar. 17-Apr. 7	May 4-24
Inflation, Recession	16%	18%	14%
Economy	14	18	19
Unemployment	9	14	10
Crime	6	-	5
Social Security	6	2	3
Energy	5	1	1
Credibility of Govt.	4	1	6
Foreign Affairs	3	13	17
Government Spending	1	1	4

Table 2 Notes

* The Gallup question is: "What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?" Multiple responses were coded, so the percentages shown summed with those not shown equal more than 100%. (Source: The Gallup Opinion Index, No. 127, Feb. 1976, No. 131, June 1976. N = approximately 1500 for each survey.)

** The question asked: "What do you personally think is the major problem or issue facing the country today?" Only one response was coded. (N = 335 Democrats in February and 277 in March.)

*** The question asked: "Which of the problems and issues facing the United States is the most important to you personally?" Only one response was coded. (N = 143 for each wave.)

Table 3

Candidate Considered Leading Democratic Field

Onondaga Co.*	Feb. 10-19	March 24-30
Jimmy Carter	2.7%	62.5%
Hubert Humphrey	14.3	1.8
Henry Jackson	6.9	4.0
Morris Udall	.6	.7
George Wallace	1.2	-
Other	2.3	-
Don't Know	72.0	31.1

Three Sites*	Feb. 4-24	Mar. 17-Apr. 7	May 4-24
Jimmy Carter	16.1	79.6	90.1
Hubert Humphrey	6.3	6.3	2.1
Henry Jackson	1.4	1.4	-
Morris Udall	2.1	.7	-
George Wallace	2.1	.7	-
Other	4.2	.7	.7
Don't Know	67.8	10.6	7.0

* The question asked which of the Democratic candidates "seems to be in the lead so far?" Sample sizes are reported in Table 2.

Table 4

Recognition Scores for Democratic Candidates (Onondaga Co. Voters)

Candidates*	Feb. 10-19	Mar. 24-30
Frank Church	22.0%	33.2%
Hubert Humphrey	79.3	89.5
George Wallace	81.4	89.5
Fred Harris	25.8	35.0
Lloyd Bentsen	19.5	21.3
Sargent Shriver	62.5	76.9
Milton Shapp	18.9	35.5
Morris Udall	35.1	57.2
Henry Jackson	52.3	72.8
Jimmy Carter	40.5	79.0
Birch Bayh	34.2	45.7

* The question was: "Suppose you had a friend who was unfamiliar with some of the presidential candidates. What would you tell this friend about ____?" The score shown is for the percentage of respondents who could provide some information about the candidate. Candidates are listed in the order given the respondents. See Table 2 for sample sizes.

Table 5

Media and (Onondaga Co.) Voter Listings

Of the Democratic Candidates' Attributes

Attributes	Pre-Campaign News Weekly Sketches*	Feb. 10-19**	March 24-30**
Campaign Approaches	58.2% (1)	15.5% (3)	28.7% (1)
Ideology, Issue Stands	12.7 (2)	18.6 (2)	20.2 (3)
Geographic Origin	7.5 (3)	6.8 (7)	9.4 (4)
Previous Campaign Experience	6.0 (4.5)	7.6 (6)	2.0 (7.5)
Personality Factors	6.0 (4.5)	21.5 (1)	25.0 (2)
Occupation	3.7 (6.5)	14.5 (4)	6.2 (5)
Other Biographic Details	3.7 (6.5)	11.1 (5)	5.9 (6)
Physical Characteristics	1.5 (8)	2.3 (8)	2.0 (7.5)
Age	0.7 (9)	2.0 (9)	0.8 (9)

* The percentages are based on the 134 sentence fragments coded from the sketches of 11 candidates appearing in Newsweek, January 12, 1976, pages 20, 21, 24. The values in parentheses are ranks.

** The February percentages are based on 811 descriptions of the 11 candidates by 335 Democratic voters; the March percentages are based on 970 descriptions from 277 Democrats. The values in parentheses are ranks.

Table 6

Correlations of Campaign Media Use With Knowledge of the Democratic Caucus And Primary Outcomes and Recognition of the Candidates (Onondaga Co. Voters)

	Correlation Coefficient*	
Feb. Media Use with Feb. Knowledge of Caucus Results	.27	
March Media Use with March Knowledge of Primary Results	.38	
Feb. Media Use with March Media Use	.52	
Feb. Knowledge of Caucus Results with March Knowledge of Primary Results	.38	
Feb. Media Use with March Knowledge of Primary Results	.33	(.33)
Feb. Knowledge of Caucus Results with March Media Use	.18	(.15)
Feb. Media Use with Feb. Candidate Recognition	.39	
March Media Use with March Candidate Recognition	.41	
Feb. Media Use with March Media Use	.52	
Feb. Candidate Recognition with March Candidate Recognition	.69	
Feb. Media Use with March Candidate Recognition	.35	(.35)
Feb. Candidate Recognition with March Media Use	.35	(.34)

* Entries are Pearson correlation coefficients for the 277 Democrats in the panel. The values in parentheses are first-order partials controlling for educational level of the panel member. All correlations shown are significant at the .05 level.

Table 7

Candidate Considered Leading Democratic Field

By Perceived Winner of Caucuses and Primaries (Onondaga Co. Voters)

Leading Candidate (Feb.)	Perceived Iowa Caucus Winner: Carter	Others	Don't Know	
Jimmy Carter*	17.1%	- %	0.9%	
Others	22.9	36.4	27.0	gamma = .30
Don't Know	60.0	63.6	72.1	
N =	(35)	(11)	(215)	

Leading Candidate (Feb.)	Perceived Mississippi Caucus Winner: Wallace	Others	Don't Know	
George Wallace*	1.7%	- %	1.0%	
Others	36.7	50.0	25.5	gamma = .27
Don't Know	61.7	50.0	73.5	
N =	(60)	(6)	(196)	

Leading Candidate (March)	Perceived New Hampshire Primary Winner: Carter	Others	Don't Know	
Jimmy Carter*	73.7%	68.4%	40.7%	
Others	6.0	15.8	6.6	gamma = .52
Don't Know	20.3	15.8	52.7	
N =	(167)	(19)	(91)	

Table 7 (continued)

Leading Candidate (March)	Perceived Massachusetts Primary Winner: Jackson	Others	Don't Know	
Henry Jackson*	5.8%	3.3%	3.4%	
Others	82.6	77.8	44.1	gamma = .58
Don't Know	11.6	18.9	52.5	
N =	(69)	(90)	(118)	

Leading Candidate (March)	Perceived Florida Primary Winner: Carter	Others	Don't Know	
Jimmy Carter*	77.9%	50.0%	36.4%	
Others	5.8	-	8.1	gamma = .68
Don't Know	16.3	50.0	55.5	
N =	(172)	(6)	(99)	

Leading Candidate (March)	Perceived Illinois Primary Winner: Carter	Other	Don't Know	
Jimmy Carter*	81.4%	66.7%	47.7%	
Others	5.3	6.7	7.4	gamma = .59
Don't Know	13.3	26.7	45.0	
N =	(113)	(15)	(149)	

* Actual winners are so designated.